



**Friday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2020**

***Good Friday***  
***Reflection Service***

Notes from our Good Friday  
Pre-recorded Worship

# Welcome and Explanation

During our time together we're going to retell the events of Jesus' arrest up to his death. This will be done on a creative way, so I hope that all the children, right up to grandparents, can share this time together. We light a candle to remember that Jesus said, "For where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am with them."

## Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus, we have come to worship you today. Open our eyes afresh to see what you went through for us. And melt our hearts with your love, that we might love you more, amen.

## Song

### Here I Am To Worship

#### Verse 1

Light of the world  
You stepped down into darkness  
Opened my eyes let me see  
Beauty that made  
This heart adore You  
Hope of a life spent with You

#### Chorus

So here I am to worship  
Here I am to bow down  
Here I am to say that You're my God  
And You're altogether lovely  
Altogether worthy  
Altogether wonderful to me

#### Verse 2

King of all days  
Oh so highly exalted  
Glorious in heaven above  
Humbly You came  
To the earth You created  
All for love's sake became poor

#### Bridge

And I'll never know how much it cost  
To see my sin upon that cross  
And I'll never know how much it cost  
To see my sin upon that cross

Let's think together about what happened on Good Friday all those many years ago. When people love you, they like to show that in all sorts of ways. They love to give things to you. Maybe they'd love to encourage you, or listen to you. They might help you when you're in difficulties. What do you think is the biggest gift someone can give you? This is a big question, isn't it? If somebody gives something so huge, what might it be?

Today we are going to be thinking about the biggest gift that ever has been given in this universe. The giver is the Father God, and the perfect gift that he has given is Jesus Christ, his son, to lay down his life for us. This happened of course on the very first Good Friday 2,000 years ago. Why is it actually called Good Friday when so many bad things happened on that day? Let's find out together.

I've got a paper roll here, and I'm going to lay out on the floor a paper cross. As we go along we lay down various other things on that cross to remind us what happened on that Good Friday. At our Tenebrae service last night, we looked at the story of Jesus having his last supper with his disciples before he then went out into the garden of Gethsemane. In the garden of Gethsemane he prayed, and then Judas came with a bunch of soldiers, and then they arrested Jesus.

## **Reading: John 18 v 1- 27**

### **Jesus Arrested**

18 When he had finished praying, Jesus left with his disciples and crossed the Kidron Valley. On the other side there was a garden, and he and his disciples went into it. 2 Now Judas, who betrayed him, knew the place, because Jesus had often met there with his disciples. 3 So Judas came to the garden, guiding a detachment of soldiers and some officials from the chief priests and the Pharisees. They were carrying torches, lanterns and weapons.

4 Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them, "Who is it you want?" 5 "Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "I am he," Jesus said. (And Judas the traitor was standing there with them.) 6 When Jesus said, "I am he," they drew back and fell to the ground. 7 Again he asked them, "Who is it you want?" "Jesus of Nazareth," they said. 8 Jesus answered, "I told you that I am he. If you are looking for me, then let these men go." 9 This happened so that the words he had spoken would be fulfilled: "I have not lost one of those you gave me."

10 Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. (The servant's name was Malchus.) 11 Jesus commanded Peter, "Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?"

12 Then the detachment of soldiers with its commander and the Jewish officials arrested Jesus. They bound him 13 and brought him first to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. 14 Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jewish leaders that it would be good if one man died for the people.

### **Peter's First Denial**

15 Simon Peter and another disciple were following Jesus. Because this disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the high priest's courtyard, 16 but Peter had to wait outside at the door. The other disciple, who was known to the high priest, came back, spoke to the servant girl on duty there and brought Peter in. 17 "You aren't one of this man's disciples too, are you?" she asked Peter. He replied, "I am not."

18 It was cold, and the servants and officials stood around a fire they had made to keep warm. Peter also was standing with them, warming himself.

### The High Priest Questions Jesus

19 Meanwhile, the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching. 20 "I have spoken openly to the world," Jesus replied. "I always taught in synagogues or at the temple, where all the Jews come together. I said nothing in secret. 21 Why question me? Ask those who heard me. Surely they know what I said." 22 When Jesus said this, one of the officials nearby slapped him in the face. "Is this the way you answer the high priest?" he demanded. 23 "If I said something wrong," Jesus replied, "testify as to what is wrong. But if I spoke the truth, why did you strike me?" 24 Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

### Peter's Second and Third Denials

25 Meanwhile, Simon Peter was still standing there warming himself. So they asked him, "You aren't one of his disciples too, are you?" He denied it, saying, "I am not." 26 One of the high priest's servants, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, challenged him, "Didn't I see you with him in the garden?" 27 Again Peter denied it, and at that moment a rooster began to crow.

## Reflection

What an amazing reading that was. I think myself into the story, and I try to figure out what the scene was, and where can I position myself within this. Here Jesus is confronted by the one that is betraying him, but not just by him but also by this whole bunch of people, soldiers, weaponry. They all come towards him, to arrest him, and of course he greets them with this one question, "Who are you actually looking for?" They answer, "We are looking for Jesus of Nazareth."

Jesus is answering saying "I am He." Now, the words "I am" are spoken in such authority, and they remind us of when Moses asked God when he met with God in the desert, "Who are you?" God said, "I am who I am." I am being, I am existence, everything flows from me. Everything, every being is created from me. So beings are created. Jesus is saying this with great authority, "I am He," and of course the effect of that is literally that all these heavily armed soldiers are floored to the ground, and have to grapple with this incredible authority that Jesus is bringing.

So then, another question is asked a bit further down in the story. Now we have Peter in the courts, and he's overhearing the questioning of Jesus. One of the servants is asking, "Aren't you one of his disciples?" And really offset to Jesus' clear proclamation of his identity of who he is, the son of God, Peter is not so sure about his identity. In fact, Peter is so thrown by the events that he doesn't even stand to who he is. He is denying who he is, and he says, "I am not." In John's gospel, those two sentences, "I am He," and "I am not," remind me of the way that humanity has disconnected from their identity of who they are as created beings, against who He is, who God is, the existence itself.

Here I want to lay down a question mark on the cross, because during Jesus' trial there have been many questions raised by different people; Pilot raised questions, Peter was asked questions, Jesus asked questions, and let's remember that there are questions that need answering.

# Response

This is how we know what love is, Jesus Christ laid down his life for us.

## Reading - Matthew 27:11-26

Jesus Before Pilate

11 Meanwhile Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" "You have said so," Jesus replied.

12 When he was accused by the chief priests and the elders, he gave no answer. 13 Then Pilate asked him, "Don't you hear the testimony they are bringing against you?" 14 But Jesus made no reply, not even to a single charge—to the great amazement of the governor.

15 Now it was the governor's custom at the festival to release a prisoner chosen by the crowd. 16 At that time they had a well-known prisoner whose name was Jesus Barabbas. 17 So when the crowd had gathered, Pilate asked them, "Which one do you want me to release to you: Jesus Barabbas, or Jesus who is called the Messiah?" 18 For he knew it was out of self-interest that they had handed Jesus over to him.

19 While Pilate was sitting on the judge's seat, his wife sent him this message: "Don't have anything to do with that innocent man, for I have suffered a great deal today in a dream because of him."

20 But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus executed. 21 "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?" asked the governor. "Barabbas," they answered. 22 "What shall I do, then, with Jesus who is called the Messiah?" Pilate asked. They all answered, "Crucify him!"

23 "Why? What crime has he committed?" asked Pilate. But they shouted all the louder, "Crucify him!"

24 When Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere, but that instead an uproar was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd. "I am innocent of this man's blood," he said. "It is your responsibility!" 25 All the people answered, "His blood is on us and on our children!"

26 Then he released Barabbas to them. But he had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.

## Reflection

So here we've got Barabbas coming into the picture. Barabbas a criminal, a known criminal, probably murdered a few people, done all sorts of stuff in his life, and there is this call, "Whom shall I release?" Pilate is asking this question because they have this custom that one criminal is released at a certain time in the year. The crowd says very clearly, they're envious of Jesus, and they want Jesus to be crucified, and therefore they shout for the criminal to be released. You see, the weirdness of that situation. I cannot imagine a society wanting the criminal released, in that sense, but here we are. Sometimes not knowing what we're doing. Can you even imagine what Barabbas must have felt like that day; he is clearly in a prison cell. He is destined to be crucified because, for the kind of stuff that he has done, surely, the death penalty was a clear outcome.

So, in the middle of his waiting, for himself to be crucified on a cross, comes this message: "You're going to be set free because somebody else is going to the cross." I don't know about you, but maybe

you can think about this with me for a moment. Maybe we can just close our eyes for a minute, and think about what that means, that somebody else takes the punishment. Maybe you imagine a soldier comes in as you are sitting in a prison cell, and tells you that you are going to be set free, because somebody else is taking the punishment on themselves. Jesus is going to be put to death and you're not. How do you feel about that?

The Bible tells us in Romans 3:23, "For all have sinned, all fall short of God's "glorious standard, yet now God in his gracious kindness "declares us not guilty. "He has done this through Christ Jesus who has freed us by taking away our sins." This Bible verse clearly states that the place on the cross is there for all of us. In the end we all have disconnected. Even though you might not have murdered someone, or might not have done any huge criminal damage, a disconnection from life means death, doesn't it? If you go up onto Mount Everest and live in the death zone, and there's not enough oxygen around you, you will die. Living disconnected from God of course means death to us all, and yet Jesus comes and reconciles us to the Father.

I want to take this nail and put it on the cross, to remind us that Jesus took our punishment. I also want to take this bowl of water, because in this story we read that Pilate came to this frustration point. He thought, 'well surely you won't take the criminal, I don't really want to give Jesus to you', but here, in the middle of his trying to please the people, and trying to do the right thing, trying to stop a revolt from breaking out, he took water and washed his hands, and he said, "I'm washing myself of this guilt. I am not guilty." Do you think Pilate could have washed himself from his sins? By just washing his hands?

I know we've been very much involved in washing our hands lately with the corona crisis, and we're told this is helpful, and it is helpful to wash our hands frequently, but even though we might wash away some virus, and even a deadly one, we cannot wash away the way that we have disconnected from God. It needs something else to do that for us. It needs someone else to lay down his life. So I'd like to place this bowl of water now, together with you, onto the cross.

## **Response**

This is how we know what love is. Jesus Christ laid down his life for us

# Song

## Story Of The Cross

### Verse 1

This is the story of the cross  
The Father loved us oh so much  
That when we did our very worst  
Jesus gave His very best  
And He died for all of us

### Verse 2

This is the story of the cross  
That we were broken we were lost  
So then You built a bridge to us  
Took our hand led us across  
Oh I'll never know the cost

### Pre-Chorus

If I said thank you a million times  
It's not enough  
But I'll sing praises for all my life  
'Cause I'm in love with You

### Chorus 1

Oh oh oh amazing grace  
Oh oh oh You took my place  
Oh oh oh now I am changed  
By Your mercy Your kindness  
This is the story of the cross

### Verse 3

This is the meaning of the cross  
That I am now a friend of God  
Oh even at my loneliest  
There's no greater love than this  
You took the nails to hold me close

### Chorus 2

Oh oh oh amazing grace  
Oh oh oh You took my place  
Oh oh oh now I am changed  
By Your mercy Your kindness Lord

## Reflection

Now the soldiers took Jesus and put a scarlet robe on him, because the colour worn by a king was scarlet. They twisted together a crown of thorns and pressed it onto Jesus' head. Imagine how painful that must have been for Jesus at that time. They were mocking him, saying 'hail king of the Jews'. I don't know whether you've been mocked recently, I'm sure you have been at some point in your life, but this type of mockery, just imagine what it is like when those who are created turn against their creator. The very one that gifted them with life, that gifted them with a tongue to speak. The very one that causes their lungs to breathe, and their hearts to beat, and they turn against him, and just mock him. Let's put the piece of bramble onto the cross.

## Response

This is how we know what love is. "Jesus Christ laid down his life for us.

## Reading - Luke 23 v 32 - 43

32 Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. 33 When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. 34 Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

35 The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, "He saved others; let him save himself if he is God's Messiah, the Chosen One." 36 The soldiers also came up and mocked him. They offered him wine vinegar 37 and said, "If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself." 38 There was a written notice above him, which read: this is the king of the jews.

39 One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" 40 But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence? 41 We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong."

42 Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." 43 Jesus answered him, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."

## Reflection

The story around the cross is such a layered story. It's not just about debts being forgiven and somebody else dying in another's place. The cross also shows us a different way of dealing with each other. Jesus hanging on the cross and with all the pain that has been inflicted upon him by others, he manages not to fall into this victim mentality. He didn't cry out in frustration calling God's wrath to come down on people, but he's praying this astonishing prayer. He says, "Father forgive them, for they do not know what they're doing." And this way of forgiveness shows us as humankind a way to deal with one another, to deal with our enemies, as Jesus has called us to bless those who curse us. To pray for those who are against us. Not to call for revenge, not to go in endless cycles of scapegoating others and making peace over the graves of those we hate. And that is part of the Easter story, incredible Easter story.



I've asked you to bring a rubber, and a pencil, and piece of paper. As we see Jesus forgiving those who sinned against him, and as he's forgiving them from the cross, we can think about what people have done to him? Now there were the disciples of course who've abandoned him, there was Judas who was betraying him, and Peter was denying him. There were the priests who were lying about Jesus, there were those who were mocking him, and Pilot of course who ordered him to be crucified. Those soldiers putting down the nails through his flesh, all those things were of course done to him, and yet he finds it within himself to forgive, and to let go. This is truly a different way that Jesus is showing us.

Now in this story we also read that there were two other criminals crucified. One of them really understands something, he sees and recognises that he is worthy to die on the cross himself, because he's done lots of things wrong, but he says 'this man, Jesus, has done nothing wrong, he doesn't deserve to be here'. Within those criminals you see two responses. Firstly, you can look at the cross and say, "Well, "I don't deserve anything, I don't deserve to be crucified, "I haven't done anything wrong, I haven't done anything greatly criminal, so why should I even bother with this message?" Or the other one, who is actually saying, "Don't you fear God even when you are dying? "We deserve to die for our evil deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong." And then he says, "Jesus remember me when you come into your kingdom."

There was a lot of betraying going on. There was denying. Lying. There was mocking. Crucifying. And you could continue that list. Anything that comes to your mind write these down, what you have ever done, and we're trapped in this life of disconnectedness, unless we connect back to God. Let's take our rubber and start rubbing out those things that come to mind. Because this is in effect what Jesus has done on the cross, he's saying, "I'm not holding these things, "this long list that humanity has done by disconnecting from their Creator, I'm not holding it against them." And he's completely rubbing it out. We can then place this on the cross too.

## Response

This is how we know what love is, Jesus Christ laid down his life for us.

## Song

### When I Survey

#### Verse 1

When I survey the wondrous cross  
On which the Prince of glory died  
My richest gain I count but loss  
And pour contempt on all my pride

#### Verse 2

See from His head His hands His feet  
Sorrow and love flow mingled down  
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet  
Or thorns compose so rich a crown

### Verse 3

Were the whole realm of nature mine  
That were an offering far too small  
Love so amazing so divine  
Demands my soul my life my all

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### **Jesus Paid It All**

#### Verse 1

And I hear the Savior say  
Thy strength indeed is small  
Child of weakness watch and pray  
Find in Me thine all in all

#### Chorus 1

'Cause Jesus paid it all  
All to Him I owe  
Sin had left a crimson stain  
He washed it white as snow

#### Verse 2

Lord now indeed I find  
Thy pow'r and Thine alone  
Can change the leper's spots  
And melt the heart of stone

#### Verse 3

And when before the throne  
I stand in Him complete  
Jesus died my soul to save  
My lips shall still repeat

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## **Confession**

I invite you to shut your eyes for a moment and think about this, is there anything that you want to say sorry to Jesus for? Be assured that Jesus has already forgiven you, all your sins, the one that you have done in the past, and the one that you will do in the future. Acknowledging that the sin, or the thoughts that come into your mind where you feel you have failed or disconnected from God - the moment you agree with God that that's the truth, that is the turning moment. That's when you connect to God again. And that's also when you feel or sense that transformation happening in your life.

Rest assured, hear Jesus say to you right now, "I forgive you," and be assured that you're always approached by the One who is forgiving you. Now one of the thieves believed that Jesus actually was who he said he was, the King, and by doing so Jesus invited him and said, 'you are going to be with me in paradise today'. The kingdom of God is an open kingdom and is an inviting kingdom. All you have to do is agree with God and participate in his redemption.

## Reflection

I'm now going to lay the crown on the cross. After a few hours of hanging on the cross, darkness came over the land, and Jesus said, "I am thirsty," and they gave him a drink of vinegar, and after that, Jesus cried out, "It is finished," and then he died. I invite you to take your lit candle, and as we think about Jesus dying on the cross, let's blow out the candle.

A that moment when Jesus died on the cross, the curtain ripped from the top right to the bottom and gave way to the holiest place within the temple. Let's take our no entry sign. This sign is usually at the end of a one-way street, so what happens if you ignore it and you drive down that street? You will most likely get into trouble, especially when traffic comes towards you. I think this is what people saw when they approached the temple, they saw this big curtain and they knew there is no way that I can actually enter into the presence of God, because God is holy and I am not. So therefore I want to lay down this sign as well on the cross, just as a reminder that Jesus came to make way for us into the presence of God, and through Jesus we can enter the holy of holiest, into the place where we can be with God and have intimate relationship with him.

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life, no one comes to the Father but through me," and this is exciting news, because Jesus himself is the way and the way is open. Let's pray together.

## Response

This is how we know what love is, Jesus Christ laid down his life for us.

## Reflection

Now, right at the end, we hear that Jesus is put into a grave, and they roll a big stone in front of that tomb. I want to lay this stone down as well as a memory for us, what Good Friday is also about. It is about this uncertainty. Jesus, who was with his disciples, was always there with them, through thick and thin, and suddenly he's not there anymore. His disciples went through great turmoil and uncertainty, and they had to shut themselves away for fear of the Roman soldiers. We can a little bit identify right now I guess, with that shutting away feeling and what that does to us at the moment.

## Response

This is how we know what love is, Jesus Christ laid down his life for us.

## Closing Thought

So, let's ask this question, do you understand now why this is called a Good Friday, and not a bad one? Because so many things happened that made such an impact on all of humanity, because Christ has restored our relationship with the Father in heaven.

## Prayer

Thank you, Lord Jesus, for loving us, thank you that you gave up your life for us. And thank you for forgiving us for all the wrong things we have done. Thank you that you welcome us into your kingdom and thank you that I can know God as my Heavenly Father and come into his presence every day. Amen.